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Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 IO-13 SSM-03 HA-05 SAA-02
CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00
PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 NEAE-00 NSCE-00 SSO-00 ICAE-00
INRE-00 TRSE-00 /083 W
----------035260 061916Z /44
O R 061830Z JUL 78
FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3997
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
AMEMBASSY CAIRO IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM
USMISSION USUN
USMISSION SINAI

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E.O. 11652: NA
TAGS: PEPR, IS, EG
SUBJECT: CONTINUING REACTION TO CAIRO PEACE PLAN

REF: TEL AVIV 8392

1. THE EGYPTIAN PEACE PROPOSALS ARE THE FEATURED STORY IN TODAY'S (JULY 6) PRESS AND A LIVELY TOPIC OF CONVERSATION IN THE COFFEE HOUSES AND BARS. THERE IS NEAR UNIVERSAL AGREEMENT THAT CAIRO'S PLAN IS A NON-STARTER AND "DISAPPOINTMENT" AND "SADNESS" ARE TERMS FREQUENTLY REPEATED IN THE COMMENTARIES. HOWEVER, SURPRISE IS NOT A
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COMMON REACTION HERE. ISRAELIS WERE BRACED FOR A HARD EGYPTIAN LINE AND DISCUSSION NOW FOCUSES ON WHY SADAT WAS SO UNBENDING AND WHAT IT WILL MEAN FOR THE PEACE PROCESS AND THE CONTENDING POLITICAL FORCES IN ISRAEL.

2. EDITORIAL COMMENT, WHICH BEGAN YESTERDAY (JULY 5), CONTINUES TO BE STRONGLY NEGATIVE. HOWEVER, THERE IS RE-

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LIEF THAT THE PLAN SETS NO PRECONDITIONS FOR THE LONDON MEETING OF FOREIGN MINISTERS AND THAT THE CONFERENCE SEEMS VIRTUALLY ASSURED. HAARETZ CALLS THE EGYPTIAN PROPOSALS "MAXIMALIST." AL HAMISHMAR SAYS THE ONLY POSITIVE ASPECT OF THE PLAN WAS THE ABSENCE OF PRECONDITIONS. BOTH EDITORIALS NOTE THAT THE PROPOSALS HARDLY DIFFER FROM SADAT'S KNESSET SPEECH AND BOTH POSIT THAT IT NOW UP TO THE U.S. TO INFUSE THE PEACE PROCESS WITH MOMENTUM.

3. MAARIV'S HARIF CALLS THE PLAN THE MOST EXTREMIST DOCUMENT THAT HAS EVER BEEN PRESENTED TO ISRAEL BY EGYPT. HE SAYS IT WAS NOT REALLY A PEACE PLAN, BUT A DEMAND FOR A GENERAL AND TOTAL WITHDRAWAL WITHOUT THE LEAST HINT OF THE POSSIBILITY OF TERRITORIAL ADJUSTMENTS. HARIF CLAIMS THAT JERUSALEM'S REACTION WILL BE AN UNEQUIVOCAL REJECTION; BUT HE ALSO NOTES THAT A DISTICTION WILL BE MADE IN THE CABINET BETWEEN THE PLAN AND GOING TO LONDON. DAYAN IS CERTAIN TO ATTEND. (FOR FURTHER PRESS REACTION, SEE TEL AVIV'S MEDIA CABLE OF JULY 6).

4. THE GUSH EMUNIM HAD IT OWN REACTION TO CAIRO'S PROPOSALS. IT HELD A PRESS CONFERENCE TODAY TO ANNOUNCE ITS PLAN FOR SETTLING 100,000 ON THE WEST BANK. GUSH LEADER HANAN PORAT CALLED THE EGYPTIAN PEACE PLAN AN EXAMPLE OF "CHUTZPAH" AND DEMANDED THAT THE ISRAELI RESPONSE BE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE GUSH PLAN.
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5. MANY ISRAELIS AGREE WITH THE VIEW EXPRESSED BY GOVERNMENT CIRCLES THAT THE CAIRO PROPOSALS WERE DESIGNED TO ENCOURAGE THE TABLING OF U.S. COMPROMISE SUGGESTIONS. SOME OBSERVERS ARGUE THAT SADAT KNEW HE COULD NOT EXPECT MUCH MORE "GIVE" FROM BEGIN AND THEREFORE CAME UP WITH AN "ABSURD PLAN" TO STIMULATE U.S. INTERVENTION. ACCORDING TO THIS REASONING, SADAT BELIEVED THAT A MORE CONCILITARY PLAN BY CAIRO WOULD HAVE ONLY POSTPONED AN AMERICAN COMPROMISE.

6. OUR CENTER AND LEFT-WING CONTACTS ARE DISPIRITED WITH THE DEEPER IMPLICATIONS THEY SEE IN CAIRO'S "MAXIMALISM". THEY BELIEVE THAT BEGIN'S HAND HAS NOW BEEN STRENGTHENED AND HIS MODERATE CRITICS BOTH WITHIN THE LIKUD (WEIZMAN) AND AMONG THE OTHER PARTIES HAVE HAD THE GROUND CUT FROM BENEATH THEM. WEIZMAN WILL NOW FIND IT DIFFICULT TO CONVINCE ISRAELIS THAT SADAT WANTS PEACE. DMC MK AKIVA NOFF, ANXIOUS FOR HIS PARTY TO REMAIN IN THE COALITION, BELIEVES THAT HE CAN NOW CONVINCE HIS PARTY COLLEAGUES THAT BEGIN IS NOT THE OBSTACLE TO PROGRESS IN THE PEACE PROCESS. MANY ISRAELIS WILL UNDOUBTEDLY DRAW THE SAME CONCLUSION.

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NOFF TOLD US THE CAIRO PLAN LOOKS LIKE THE DICTATE OF THE VICTOR
OVER THE VANQUISHED. "IT IS NOT EVEN A STARTING POINT;
ITS IMPOSSIBLE."
LEWIS

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